

WASHINGTON INDEPENDENT WRITERS

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Executive Registry

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Raskin, Barbara  
(orig under Journalists)

October 13, 1976

BARBARA RASKIN,  
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Mr. George Bush  
Central Intelligence Agency  
Langley, Virginia

Dear Mr. Bush:

On June 7, 1976, I wrote to you on behalf of the Washington Independent Writers enclosing a resolution adopted by our membership. The resolution noted that according to the final report of the Senate Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities the CIA announcement of February 11, 1976, would not apply to "freelance contributors" abroad. WIW asked that the CIA immediately end its use of independent writers for intelligence purposes.

Your reply of July 6, 1976, does not contradict the conclusion of the Senate committee. It refers to a press report of a meeting between your agency and a private group, the National News Council, and you enclosed an AP account of this meeting. The AP quotes you as having told the council that freelance writers for American news organizations would not be "hired" by the CIA.

Since a wire service story reporting second-hand what may have been said to a private group cannot, of course, be considered a statement of official policy by the United States government or one of its agencies, we would appreciate a direct statement to us by you as to whether the CIA's current policy is, or is not, to use independent writers in its intelligence activities and operations.

As matters stand now, the only official statement by a government entity remains the Church committee's report stating that the CIA policy against using journalists does not apply to freelance writers.

We would greatly appreciate any clarification from you on this very important subject.

Sincerely yours,

Barbara Raskin

Barbara Raskin, President